

Xmas trees light up ... and The Brooklyn Paper team is there



Tom Gilbert
GREENPOINT



Adam Hutton
DUMBO



Gersh Kuntzman
PARK SLOPE



Mike McLaughlin
BOERUM HILL



Joe Jordan
BAY RIDGE

"Apparently, there will soon be a ceremony in which this evergreen in McCarren Park will be covered in ornamentation."

"This silver-colored metal structure showed up at the Pearl Street Triangle, an apparent reference to another seasonal holiday."

"Thanks to my fifth grade math teacher, I know how to calculate the volume of this hollow cylinder at Grand Army Plaza."

"A closer examination of this standalone evergreen, at Atlantic and Bond, revealed lots of tiny white bulbs."

"My investigation proved that this object at Shore Road and 91st Street is, indeed, a Christmas tree — not a holiday tree."

SN1
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2007

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The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

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BROOKLYN HTS-CGARDENS-DTOWN-FT GREENE EDITIONS

INCLUDING DUMBO, CLINTON HILL, COBBLE HILL, BOERUM HILL

AWP/20 pages • Vol. 30, No. 48 • Saturday, Dec. 8, 2007 • FREE



Suit: Beep's office biased

By Gersh Kuntzman

The Brooklyn Paper

Borough President Markowitz used a city hall staffer as campaign workers and ignored "inappropriate sexual activity" by four of his employees, a new bombshell lawsuit by Markowitz's former spokeswoman claims.

Those claims represent the juicy nuggets in an otherwise uneventful age and gender discrimination lawsuit filed Monday in Brooklyn Supreme Court by Markowitz's former communications director, Robin Weiss. Virtually all of the 16-page filing sticks to the central allegation that Weiss, 50, was "discriminated against and wrongfully discharged ... on the bases of her age and gender."

Specifically, Weiss's suit targets Markowitz's chief of staff, Greg Atkins. Weiss said Atkins forced her to leave in early 2006, despite glowing job-performance reviews from Markowitz himself.

Asked about the lawsuit, the borough president's office said, effectively, bring it on.

"These unfounded claims should be taken in context — they are from a disgruntled former employee who was dismissed," the statement said. "If served with court papers, we will address these baseless allegations in court. This office stands by its excellent EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) record."

See **BIAS CLAIM** on page 16

Joy on Duffield

Deal saves 'Underground Railroad' home

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

The city said it will redesign a park that is the centerpiece of its plan for Downtown Brooklyn after the owner of a home linked by historians to the Underground Railroad won a court settlement last week.

The house in question sits at 227 Duffield St., on land would have been the southwest corner of the Williamsburg Plaza, a 10-acre greenspace that city officials hope will be the Bryan Park-style heart of a newly booming Downtown Brooklyn.

"In order to keep the city promised it would 'not seek to condemn' 227 Duffield Street in conjunction with the Downtown Brooklyn Development Plan," Now that the house will remain, city officials will be forced to come up with a niche in the park, said Patterson, a spokeswoman for the city's Economic Development Corporation.

"It is premature to say" how exactly the settlement will affect the design of the park, since "designs have not begun yet," added Patterson.

But what is clear is that the owner of the house, Joy Chaiel, has won a nearly four-year-long battle to keep the home, what critics have called an abutment of eminent domain.

The fight began in 2004, when the city



Duffield Street resident Joy Chaiel shows a tunnel in her basement that she believes was used by fugitive slaves.

passed a plan to redevelop a Downtown Brooklyn that has ushered in a building boom throughout the area bounded by Flatbush Avenue Extension and Tillary, Jay and Fulton streets. At the center of that expansion was to be a new great green space and with a planned grand staircase at Williamsburg Plaza.

In order to create the park, the city said it would have to condemn Chaiel's property, and up to six other homes on Duffield Street and in the block between Duffield St. and Clinton streets were not part of the Underground Railroad, though the report was repudiated by two-thirds of its peer reviewers.

"There is no evidence ... of African Americans living at Chaiel's house," archaeologist Cheryl LaRoche said at the time.

But Joe Chan, the president of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, countered in a statement that "Williamsburg has always been the cornerstone of the [Downtown] Brooklyn's

See **DUFFIELD** on page 5



GOOD DOG: This German shepherd scared the wits out of a mugger in Fort Greene, frightening him into dropping the purse he'd just taken.

DOG ON IT!

Hero pooch hounds mugger

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

A Brooklyn dog earned his kibble the other night by chasing down a purse-snatcher on a Fort Greene avenue.

Tim, an 85-pound, 3-year-old German shepherd with a kindly demeanor, was taking his 7:30 pm constitutional near the corner of Clinton and DeKalb avenues with companion Nancy Peterson on Nov. 15 when a mugger armed with what appeared to be a thick gold chain concealed under his jacket.

"Tim then I heard this woman begin screaming and crying," recalled Peterson, the president of the Fort Greene PUPS. "I don't know how, but I knew he had stolen something from the woman."

And then Peterson got mad.

"I thought, 'How dare you do that to somebody in this neighborhood!'"

And so Peterson and Tim raced off after the apparent mugger, with Peterson screaming, "My dog will rip you apart!"

The irony, said Peterson, is that Tim wouldn't even know how to do that. But in this case, the killer glare of an animal best known as a purse-snatcher — do matters.

Afraid for his life, the young man dropped the item — the "gold chain" turned out to be the handle of the umbrella he had just snatched to the sidewalk and kept running toward Lafayette Avenue.

"The woman was so, so happy," said Peterson.

And Tim? Well, he walked home and had an otherwise normal evening.

Meet the menorahs

Jews around the world began the eight-day Hanukkah festival on Tuesday night by lighting menorahs — but Brooklyn Jews did it twice. First, Chabad of Brooklyn Heights lit the borough's "official" candelabrum (above) with Brooklyn Mayor Markowitz officiating at Borough Hall. Then the house at 400 Court St. in Dyker Heights (right) was abuzz with "largest menorah in the borough" with an arguably even more Jewish guest: Mr. Met (with Delta Kirshenblat, left). Who knew he was Jewish? The holiday continues through Wednesday; the final candles will be lit on Tuesday night. See full coverage of the menorah matchup, on page 18.

Dyker man on YouTube ignites GOP fisticuffs over immigration

By Noah C. Zuss

The Brooklyn Paper

A Dyker Heights man not only incited a debate about illegal immigration at last week's Republican debate, but he also thrust himself and his neighborhood into an international controversy.

But that's Ernie Nardi, 59, a resident of the 59-year-old Dyker Heights neighborhood proved that he's not afraid to take an unpopular position on a controversial issue when his pre-recorded question kicked off last week's Re-

publican debate on CNN.

Nardi is a technician for the Madison Square Garden Network who has lived in Brooklyn his entire life. He says that illegal immigrants are "stealing the fact of the land and believe that those here illegally are displacing legal citizens and contributing to our decline. He is angry that New York has become a haven, and destination for illegal immigrants."

And get this: He's a registered Democrat.

The question that began the debate featured Nardi on a YouTube video, his white-

haired head covering 70 percent of the screen and a TV with rabbit ears in the background, criticizing former Mayor Giuliani for running a "sanitary city" for immigrants during his administration.

"This is Ernie Nardi from Dyker Heights in Brooklyn, New York," he started his accent modulation to those who have seen even more serious debate. (You can see a link to his YouTube video at BrooklynPaper.com.)

"If you become president, will you con-

tinute to aid and abet ... illegal aliens coming into this country?" he concluded, practically

burning out the final words.

The question did put Giuliani on the defensive, and allowed a rival, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, to attack what political foes say is a "soft-on-immigration" position. "The Nardi Gambit." But after a few minutes of back-and-forth — Giuliani accused Romney of being illegal aliens at the government's expense, while Giuliani accused Giuliani of ignoring the central crime of undocumented workers, namely, that they're here illegally the nation moved on.

But not Nardi.

"Rudy Giuliani just lied to you," he said in a response that was not, alas, part of the debate, but is still floating in the YouTube ether.

He's still angry. Nardi says that he chose to speak up because of how Giuliani, as well as his predecessors, dealt with illegal immigration. He claims that there is a "total lack of enforcement" and that Giuliani's "lack of enforcement, the greatest of all, is the reason why there are so many illegal immigrants in this country."

See **YOUTUBE** on page 16

PARK SLOPE
BORO'S BIGGEST MENORAH
AT GRAND ARMY PLAZA

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Sat., Dec. 8, 3 pm
Sun., Dec. 9, 6 pm
Mon., Dec. 10, 6 pm
Tues., Dec. 11, 5 pm

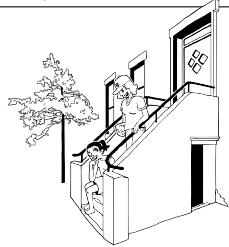
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AT COURT & MONTAGUE

Candle lighting, music
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THE stoop

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

Is O'Malley really evil?

Until Monday, baseball had been admirably reluctant to admit former Mayor Fiorello La Guardia O'Malley — the man who amputated part of Brooklyn's soul by taking Dem Bums to Los Angeles in 1957 — into Hall of Fame.

O'Malley, of course, was once an immensely hated figure in these parts. According to the well-known anecdote, during the 1960s New York journalists Pete Hamill and Jack Newfield would draw up elaborate lists of the 10 worst human beings in history. When the lists were compared, the top two were the unfeeling Hitler and the Walsh O'Malley.

Today, some of the harsh feelings have softened. Some of us even entertain revisionist thoughts that assign responsibility for O'Malley's loss to Mayor Wagner or Robert Moses.

But the fact of the matter is that this kid up to Cooperstown is an unforgivable insult to Brooklyn or no big deal, let's look at the case made by his supporters.

• O'Malley is the owner who brought the major leagues to the West Coast and made America's pastime truly national.

• He had something to do with the Dodgers' integrating baseball

BESIDE THE POINT



Tom Gilbert

• He made a lot of money in Los Angeles, and the Dodgers won a lot of pennants there.

• He did not want to move the Dodgers out of Brooklyn. He tried to, but the city's politicians would not help him build a new park to replace Ebbets Field.

And so the point is easily dismissed. The second point is easily dismissed, too. The owner of the second point is easily dismissed.

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• He did not want to move the Dodgers out of Brooklyn. He tried to, but the city's politicians would not help him build a new park to replace Ebbets Field.

And so the point is easily dismissed.

At the same time, the point is also a very good

team won a lot of pennants and made a lot of money before O'Malley took them to La La Land.

• He is the first and last owner you must remember that in the 1950s and 1960s, when they do, enjoyed a legal monopoly that allowed them to dupe the nation's baseball markets amongst themselves. This has almost guaranteed their profitability, as it would for any company with a popular product that faced vir-

ginating competition.

Dipping into their own deep pockets, an earlier generation of baseball magnates had built most of the existing major league baseball parks, including Tiger Stadium, Forbes Field, Fenway Park, and Ebbets Field. But then, through the 1970s, these parks became small, run-down, obsolete.

At the same time, America's population center was moving toward the south and west, away from the northeastern quadrant, where baseball teams were located. The wily owners hit upon the idea of getting local governments to build them brand-new ballparks by threatening to relocate to a neglected market such as L.A., Atlanta, or San Francisco.

Today, the New York Yankees are once again building ballparks with their own money.

The reason O'Malley lost the game and moved to California

was simply this: because Brooklyn would not let him build a new ballpark for his own purse strings, it could be blackmailed into building, or subsidizing the land for, a new ballpark for the Dodgers. As much as the people of Brooklyn might have wanted their tax dollars to go for such a purpose, the city's Board of Estimate did not feel under pressure to help pay for a facility that would be used almost exclusively by one of the five boroughs.

Look for Part II of Tom Gilbert's story next week and find out whether O'Malley could have actually stayed in Brooklyn and whether his admission to Cooperstown is an insult to Brooklyn.

Gilbert is a writer and baseball historian who lives in Greenpoint.



This former police stationhouse on Poplar Street will not be developed into apartments, but rented out to a school or learning center, the owner now says.

Precinct house won't be homes

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

The owner of a century-old former NYPD stationhouse in Brooklyn Heights has scrapped his plans to convert the building into apartments, and two schools are vying to lease the long-dormant space in its entirety.

New residential development in DUMBO has caused the student body at nearby PS 8 to grow exponentially in the last two years, said Brooklyn Heights Association Executive Director Judy Stanton. With almost 500 students enrolled, the school has

reached its capacity and needs to expand.

Since 2004, the Brooklyn Heights Center, which provides education and treatment for children and adults with learning disabilities and emotional problems since 1953, needs more space to continue its programs and is planning to move from its DUMBO location at 30 Washington St. when its current lease expires.

Both schools have expressed an interest in leasing the circa-1913 precinct house, owned by Regal Investments, which acquired the 72 Poplar St. building at a 2004 city auction for \$9.6 million.

Maurice Labor, Regal's owner, bought

the building without knowing that it was within the Brooklyn Heights Historic District, which barred him from building anything over 50 feet or altering the facade in any way.

In 2005, Labor put the stationhouse on the market with an asking price of \$15 million. He quickly changed his mind and continued to gut the interior for residential purposes.

Now that those renovations are substantially complete, Labor wants to rent the 30,000-square-foot building to a single tenant, said Bill Punch, a partner and spokesman for Regal Investments.

New space is a scofflaw paradise

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

A Montague Street business group's attempt to make it easier for ambulances to drop off patients at a clinic on the street is being stymied by the very agency that helped set up the parking in the first place — the Department of Transportation.

As this not-so-shocking tale shows, a DOT car was parked the other day in the "Access-a-Ride Bus Stop" in front of the Montague Street building, housing several Long Island College Hospital Clinics.

The DOT had only just helped the Montague Street Business Improvement District create the space so that ambulance drivers would not need to double-park and block traffic while they discharge their cane-wielding patients.

"We were so happy that DOT set up the space for us — in fact, they did it without much

hassle at all," said Chelesa Maudlin, executive director of the Montague Street BID.

"But since it was created in November, we have had a lot of problems with placard parking

in that space," she added, referring to city and state permitting cars parking in the newly created space.

"The other day, there was even an NYPD car in there," Maudlin said.

Maudlin reiterated that she was pleased by the way in which DOT and New York City Transit, which regulates busses, worked together to create the spot — but said she was now working with the NYPD to ensure that the space remain unoccupied so that it can be used for its intended purpose.

The Brooklyn Paper's photo speaks for itself — but not for the Department of Transportation, which sent over a statement that expressed concern that its employees and others were missing the space.

"We are glad to provide parking for the ambulance service," the DOT said. "However, the DOT vehicle was illegally parked, and we are taking steps to prevent future occurrences."



The Brooklyn Paper / G. Kuntzman

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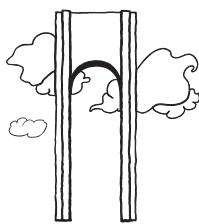
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BAY RIDGE-BENSONHURST DYKER HEIGHTS BATH BEACH

Evil O'Malley is in the Hall

They're putting the biggest bum of 'em all in the Hall. On Monday, Mayor Michael Bloomberg's newest addition is elected: Walter O'Malley, whose name will live on in villainy forever thanks to his decision to move the Dodgers to Los Angeles. The Hall of Fame? It's safe to say that very few votes came from this borough.

"The man was a traitor who only cared about making as much money as possible," says Carl, a lifelong Brooklyn Dodgers fan and Richard Montalbano, "Hall of Shame, yes, but Hall of Fame, no. The guy is a bum and he'll always be a bum."

"I'll never visit the Hall of Fame so long as I live," added Montalbano.

Another longtime resident, the plan on visiting the Hall, albeit as something to touch above a spectator.

"I plan to be at the ceremony next July just to yell out, 'Rot in hell, O'Malley,' at the most opportune times," responded Rabbitman on Bayridge.com.

O'Malley never got to team up in the 1957 series. The residents of Bay Ridge were hit especially hard because a number of players lived in Bay Ridge during the season, including Pee Wee Reese, who lived on Terrell Avenue and 97th Street; Duke Snider, who lived on Marine Avenue between 97th and 98th streets; Carl Erskine, who lived on Lafayette Avenue between 68th Street; Roger Craig, who lived on Colonial Road between 68th and 69th streets; Danny McDevitt, who lived on Colonial Road between 70th and 71st streets.

In addition, Carl Spooner worked in the off season at Marathon Motors on the corner of 69th Street and Franklin Avenue and Rue Weller lived on 76th Street and Ridge Boulevard.

The Brooklyn paper rumors that real-estate brokers refused to show Jackie Robinson houses in Bay Ridge.

No wonder how easy it was to hate O'Malley. From the 1950s until the late 1950s, living in Bay Ridge meant always having the possibility of running into Pee Wee Reese getting a cup of coffee or Carl Erskine showing show.

And one man took it all away from you. No wonder people still tell the old joke, "If Stalin, Hitler and O'Malley are in a room and you have to sit with one, who do you kill?" Answer: You shoot O'Malley's wife, as to make sure he's dead!

"There was blood on the streets," said Jerry Polizzi, whose art supply store bearing his name is located on 7813 Third Ave. "They cursed him up and down."

O'Malley chose to sweep over memories when he moved the Bums to L.A., after he couldn't squeeze the city for a new stadium. The hatred runs deep, so deep, in fact, that it spans generations.

Bob Nevin worked as a young ticket taker at Ebbets Field for 50 cents a day. His father, now 80, at O'Sullivan's Bar, a now-defunct staple at Irish pubs and local radio stations across the city. Better catch them before they're so local... Another local musician, Frankie Marras, has launched a Web site (www.seeomalley.com)

Matthew Lysiak is a writer who lives in Bay Ridge.

THE KITCHEN SINK

On Dec. 22, the **Canny Brothers**, a Dyker Heights musical band of brothers, will be performing their greatest hits year at **Bar 461** (77th and Ave. C) on Sunday, Dec. 9. The band's most frequent staple is Irish pubs and local radio stations across the city. Better catch them before they're so local... Another local musician, **Frankie Marras**, has launched a Web site (www.seeomalley.com)

See O'MALLEY on page 4

YELLOW HOOKER



Matthew Lysiak



Repairs on the Verrazano Bridge have some drivers wishing they had a cannon.

Bridge fix driving 'em nuts!

By Noah C. Zuss
for The Brooklyn Paper

From the ongoing restoration of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge has come a new problem: drivers who are stuck in traffic around the span — and at least one businessman says he's losing it because of it.

"I am losing tens of thousands of dollars a year from late deliveries, extra fuel and increased overtime times," said Greg Abl, owner of a technology services and communications company. "It's incredibly frustrating because it makes it a lot tougher for small businesses to survive."

Abl was one of dozens of people who attended a public-style meeting on Tuesday night, which state Sen. Marty Golden (R-Bay Ridge) hosted for the very purpose of hearing community concerns about the six-month old project.

He heard plenty.

"It's just terrible situation and traffic is a real danger," said homeowner Elaine O'Rourke, who has lived on Bay Ridge Place for over 25 years and never seen it "this bad."

"We can't even do normal things anymore, like order food to be delivered or get medicines from a doctor," he said. "The only way to escape from the traffic most of the time and I feel that it is taking away our quality of life."

Golden faced frustration with the pace and scope of the \$88-million project.

"I was speaking with a lawyer from Bay Ridge recently and he said that the project is taking from 91 to 92nd on a local avenue," Golden said. "To go one block, that's just a terrible situation. That's a serious impact, and

it's not fair to the community, we need to work to get something done."

Possible interim solutions suggested by Golden include changing bridge work hours to off-peak travel times, opening a west-bound lane to occasional vehicle traffic on the mainland roadway, and increasing the number of traffic agents on the ground to reduce major backups at crucial intersections.

Femera took potshots from the crowd for more than an hour, but the closest he came to offering any hope was when he mentioned that \$500,000 had been added to the project as an incentive to speed it up so that it will be completed by September, a few months early.

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Hey, mom: Here's a new way to stay sane

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

A Fort Greene mother, who nearly ended up in the psych ward following the birth of her first child, has decided to launch a new Web site dedicated to moms.com, to help newly delivered adjust to the very idea of being a "mom."

In so doing, Vedder is jumping into what has become an online mommy industrial complex. It's a complex that contains dozens of Web sites, targeting everyone from new mothers (busthroughmom.com) to new-at-home moms (clubmom.com) to breast-feeding moms (breast-feeding.com) to Park Slope mothers (moms.com).

Vedder's site focuses on the notion of a mother's identity.

"Women are very happy to answer questions and welcome me, but I don't see it online about how they don't really know who they are anymore," said Bethany Vedder, now a mother of two whose life largely stay-at-home mothers.

"I hear the same things over and over again: 'I have no time for myself,' 'I don't think straight,' 'I don't even know what I want anymore because my kids need me 24/7,'" added

Vedder. "It was time to get the conversation moving a bit."

So far, most of the comments have been from mothers of a woman calling herself "comfortablecrazy," who wrote that having kids "shifted all [her] priorities in a different

direction." Not that's bad, but when you have a baby on your one-year anniversary, it's not so good. "It played on all my insecurities. It caused me to look at myself in a different way and I wasn't sure if I liked what I saw."

The mother of a 17-month-old, and a 5-and-a-half-year-old, Vedder said that she experienced similar emotions and nearly lost her sanity after the birth of her second child.

"It was this feeling that I don't know how to do this," said Vedder. "Being a mother wasn't my choice since I was 3 years old. It just happened."

And it engendered an identity crisis, an experience she's never seen replicated with her clients. For some, it's a sense of loss, of who they're not spending enough time with their children. For others, it's guilt that they're not spending enough time with their kids and too little on their own pursuits.

Dan McAdams, a psychologist



Fort Greene writer Bethany Vedder, founder of www.sanemoms.com, at her desk with son Flynn. Photo by Dana Rubinstein

professor at Northwestern University, said most women's self-images are altered by having a child, but he wasn't so sure about the prevalence of that feeling.

"For some people, maybe it is," said McAdams. "But there isn't any research that shows that it's a predictable thing."

McAdams' business was shared by Susan Fox, who founded Park Slope Parents Web site in 2002.

"We have a lot about parenting on the Internet are so plentiful that it may be hard to gain lots of members in the space," said

Fox. "But the bottom line to me is this: anything that supports parenthood and its trials and tribulations is admirable."

Vedder will officially launch her site on Dec. 12, and the three-kilometer run in Fort Greene Park (the run is to underscore the importance of ac-

tivities that allow for "alone time.")

Run the Moms and Kiddie

Race. Fort Greene Park (bound-
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Photo by Dana Rubinstein

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December 8, 2007

Man stabbed in bar—again

By Matthew Lysiak and Michael Giardina
The Brooklyn Paper

68th Precinct

Yet another bar fight broke out in Bay Ridge last night, and this time a 23-year-old man was stabbed three times at a Fourth Avenue watering hole on Nov. 30.

This time trouble began when the victim, a 23-year-old man in the popular bar, which is located near 90th Street. Shortly after 3 a.m., he got into an argument with a customer that quickly turned violent, according to cops.

Police say that's when the thug pulled out a box cutter and stabbed the victim once in the chest, back, and left shoulder before fleeing on foot.

The victim was treated for minor injuries at the scene. Police and the city health department issued a statement from local officials since there has been an increase in drunken violence over the past 16 months — including at least nine stabbings.

Cops are on notice that they could lose their liquor license, police told Community Board 10 members.

Gas violence

A 17-year-old boy told cops he was standing on the corner of Third Avenue and 76th Street on Nov. 27 when a familiar gang attacked him.

Cops say the crime went down at 11 p.m., when the victim was approached by the three gang members, who were wearing black and blue bandanas. The trio ordered the teen to hand over his gas, which contained an IPA. He promptly followed orders.

"Because you did nothing crazy, we are not going to hit you," one of the condiderate creeps said.

The boy identified the perps to cops by their street names, "Payaso," "Chot," and "Clony."

D'oh! Nut
A 20-year-old Bay Samaritan!

A 36-year-old woman left her pocket book behind at a Fourth Avenue Dunkin' Donuts at around 11:30 p.m. and returned minutes later to discover that someone had grabbed it on Dec. 2.

Security cameras at the donut shop, which is near 87th Street, caught the opportunistic thief running off with the purse, which contained \$200.

Lady mugged

Chilly really is dead.

A woman had \$2,600 robbed by his own friend, right in front of his very eyes, after his buddy lifted the money bag from his vehicle on Nov. 30, police said.

The 56-year-old victim was parked on 86th Street, near 15th Avenue, at around 11 a.m., when his friend approached the passenger side of his minivan, where the money was laying.

The old chums began talking, when all of a sudden the thief swiped the bag of cash from his seat and fled.

The former friend still hasn't been caught.

Safe heist

A safe containing more than \$20,000 in cash and jewelry was stolen from an Ovington Court apartment on Nov. 30.

The victim told cops that she had intended to use the money

to buy Christmas presents.

Lady mugged

A 28-year-old woman was mugged on 84th Street near Third Avenue on Nov. 27.

The 78-year-old victim was on her way home after doing some shopping, shortly around 11 p.m., when she was knocked to the ground behind her by a crudely heisted perp.

The thug grabbed her purse, and \$30 inside, before running away.

62nd Precinct

Friendly swipe
A woman had \$2,600 robbed by his own friend, right in front of his very eyes, after his buddy lifted the money bag from his vehicle on Nov. 30, police said.

The 56-year-old victim was parked on 86th Street, near 15th Avenue, at around 11 a.m., when his friend approached the passenger side of his minivan, where the money was laying.

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Tag team

Two thugs robbed and robbed a man as he was leaving his home on Avenue C at 4 a.m. on Nov. 28.

The 39-year-old was near Dahill Road when the thugs approached. One member of the gang was carrying an unknown weapon on his head, while the other shoved him to the ground, and swiped \$386 and his cell phone, police said.

The two perps fled as the victim lay faced down on the pavement.

Bodega hold up

A gun-toting perp robbed a Bath Avenue grocery store, shortly after 11 p.m. on Nov. 28.

The perp entered the bodega, which is near Bay 34th Street, at around 11:35 a.m. and demanded money.

To make matters easier, he took out the black pistol and took \$500 from the stunned counterman, police said.

The thug fled in a white four-door sedan on Bath Avenue.

Rental robbery

A rental van was stolen — along with the furniture of the man who had rented it on Dec. 1, cops said.

The victim had loaded up the 2007 white Budget van with his prized possessions and left the vehicle parked on 63rd Street near 16th Avenue. When he went back to the van, it was gone.

Cops are asking the public to help locate the van, with New York plate 2IC-657. If you see it, call the 62nd Precinct at (718) 236-2611.

Fatal stabbing at the Gregory

By Joe Jordan
The Brooklyn Paper

Normally quiet Bay Ridge is reeling over a mysterious fatal stabbing at a Fourth Avenue hotel on Monday morning.

David Diaz, 26, was found dead in his room at the Best Western Gregory Hotel just before noon by a hotel employee. Within minutes NYPD units responded to the frenzied scene, roping off much of Fourth Avenue between 83rd and 84th streets throughout the day.

Police say Diaz had been stabbed in the back and had been beaten about the head.

Diaz, who lived a few blocks away on Fifth Avenue and 76th Street, had checked into the hotel on Sunday with an unidentified woman.

Police said the woman is wanted for questioning, but could not confirm whether she is currently a suspect. Family members and neighbors are also being questioned.

The hotel staff wasn't talking this week, either. "No comment," said a manager.

Shocked neighbors say Diaz had lived with his parents. The family had previously lived above Leske Bakery at 7612 Fifth Ave. and moved two doors down to its current apartment almost two years ago.

An employee at Bay Ridge Pizzeria and Restaurant, at 7704 Fifth Ave., said Diaz would often come in for a pie. He called the dead man "a good guy."

The hotel, located at 54th St. and Fourth Avenue, was built in 1926. A fire in 1986 destroyed the interior, but it was restored and reopened as a Comfort Inn.

More recently, it became part of the Best Western chain, yet retained its traditional moniker, "Gregory Hotel."

O'MALLEY...

Continued from page 3

frankiemarra.com), Marra used to work for Bruce Springsteen . . . "The Winds of Change," which is the newsletter of the Brooklyn Drama Project, is a monthly publication of reviews and thoughts, including a recent review of our French hit, *Petit Ours*, located on 267 Bay Ridge Ave. Reviewer **Patrick Daniel Gott** gave it four and a half stars . . . Last week, Duane Reade announced that it will open a new store at the Rockaway Center, a free-standing one-story retail facility for individuals and families at 436 86th St. . . . If you like Christmas lights and palm trees then **Sam Malouf**'s home on the corner of Colonial Road and 81st Street is the place to be. Take the kids — and the sunglasses.

E-mail us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com.

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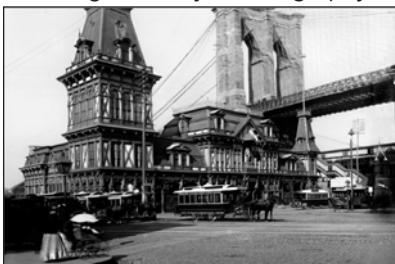


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Hey, mom: Here's a new way to stay sane

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Vedder. "It was time to get the conversation moving a bit."

So far, most of the comments have been from women calling herself "comfortablecrazy," who wrote that having kids "shifted all [her] priorities in [her] marriage."

"Not that that's bad, but when you have a baby on your one-year anniversary, it's a little crazy," she said. "It played on all my insecurities. It caused me to look at myself in a different way and I wasn't sure if I liked what I saw."

The mother of a 17-month-old and a 5-and-a-half-year-old, Vedder said that she experienced similar emotions and nearly lost her sanity after the birth of her second child.

"It was this feeling that I don't know how to do this," said Vedder. "Being a mother wasn't my choice since I was 3 years old. It just is."

And it engendered an identity crisis, an experience she's seen replicated with a number of her friends and clients.

For that reason, Vedder is launching a new Web site, www.sanemoms.com, to breast-feeding moms (breast-feeding.com) to Park Slope Medical Center in Brooklyn.

Vedder's site focuses on the notion of a mother's identity.

"Women are very happy to answer questions and we can't but I don't see it online about how they don't really know who they are anymore," said Brooklyn Vedder, now a mother of two and a life coach whose client base is largely stay-at-home mothers.

"I hear the same things over

and over again: 'I have no time for myself' or 'I'm not thinking straight.' I don't even know what I want anymore because my kids need me 24/7,'" added



Bethany Vedder, founder of www.sanemoms.com, at her desk with son Finn.

gy professor at Northwestern University, said most women's self-images are altered by having a child, but he wasn't so sure about the prevalence of depression.

"For some people, maybe it is," said McAdams. "But there isn't any research that shows

that it's a predictable thing."

McAdams' dubiousness was shared by Susan Fox, who founded Park Slope Parents Web site in 2002.

"I think it's about parenting on the Internet that so plentiful that it may be hard to gain lots of members in the space," said

Fox. "But the bottom line to me is this: anything that supports parenting and its trials and tribulations is admirable."

Vedder will officially launch her site on Dec. 15, with a one-kilometer run in Fort Greene Park (the run is to underscore the importance of ac-

tivities that allow for "alone time.")

Run the Moms and Kiddie Race. Fort Greene Park (bounded by Dekalb Avenue, Myrtle Street, Washington Park and St. Edwards Street), 9 a.m. Visit www.sanemoms.com for information.

Two burglars in one night on Scholes

POLICE BLOTTER

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

90th Precinct

A burglar broke into two Scholes Street apartments on Nov. 26, robbing an Apple iPhone for \$20 from one and stealing thousands of dollars in electronics from another, cops said.

The first theft occurred sometime between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Nov. 26. The burglar was not at the apartment, which is between Humboldt Street and Bushwick Avenue.

The thief stole a digital camera, a Nintendo Wii system, and three video cameras.

The second theft, which was on the same block — told police that she was not home between midnight and 3 a.m. when the iBook burglary occurred.

L of a mugging

A thief snatched a woman's handbag as she was waiting for a Canarsie-bound L train at the Morgan Avenue station on Nov. 30.

The 22-year-old was on the platform at around 5 p.m. when a thief came up from behind, grabbed the bag and headed towards the Bogart Street exit of the station, but for some reason, he doubled back, pushed

the woman to the ground and said, "Don't follow me."

A burglar who had just left a Manhattan Avenue grocery store just said no to a 24-year-old thief on Nov. 30 — and the perp left without taking anything.

The first thief followed him out of the store, which is between Conseyela Street and Kingsland Avenue, around the can, caught up to him, pulled out a gun and said,

"Gimme all your money."

But when the won't-be victim said, "No," the gunman went for his gun.

Garage rob A Grand Street bodega was robbed of thousands of dollars in cash, cigarettes and phone cards on Nov. 29, during the 15 minutes it took the burglar to take out the trash, cops said.

The victim told police that he had pulled down the gate, but not locked it, at around 11 to 12 a.m. when the burglar came.

When he returned, he noticed

two men running from the store, which is between Manhattan and Graham avenues, with a gun in their hands.

The bag contained \$3,900, \$2,600 in cash and \$1,000 in phone cards.

Found lost

A thief stole a fancy satellite-guided navigation system from a 10th Street Lorraine Avenue on Nov. 30, cops said.

The 35-year-old owner of the Chevy Silverado said the car thief had parked the car on the corner of Union Avenue at just after midnight, but when he returned at around 7 a.m., he had drilled the driver's side door and the 4,000 navigation system was gone.

One day later on the same corner, a 2004 Nissan Maxima was swiped, its owner told cops.

A 20-year-old car owner said he had parked his car on Union Street at 5 a.m. but it wasn't there when he got back.

iPod iGone

A thief pounced on a woman as she was listening to her iPod on Nov. 30, 24, grabbing the popular digital music device right

Snow time for swimming

If it's snowing, it must be a beautiful day for a swim at Coney Island, as these members of the Arctic Ice Breakers proved during the season's first snow on Sunday.



out of the woman's hands as she was walking on Lorimer Street.

The 24-year-old victim told cops that she was near the corner of Ten Eyck Street at around 10 a.m. when the thief ran up and grabbed the phone.

She was not injured in the incident.

Boerum beat

A thief pounced on a 28-year-old and stole his Dell laptop on Nov. 26, 26, cops said.

The 33-year-old owner of the Chevy Silverado said the car thief had parked the car on the corner of Union Avenue at just after midnight, but when he returned at around 7 a.m., he had drilled the driver's side door and the 4,000 navigation system was gone.

One day later on the same corner, a 2004 Nissan Maxima was swiped, its owner told cops.

A 20-year-old was mugged for his cellphone by another teenager on Nov. 28, 28, said cops.

The 15-year-old approached him on the corner of Graham Avenue and Metropolitan Avenue at around 4 p.m. and punched him in the nose and told him to "roll your pockets."

The boy "didn't want any problems," so he gave the thief the phone.

Skate off

A man's skateboard was stolen from his Bushwick Avenue apartment on Nov. 28, cops said.

The 33-year-old victim told police that he was not in the apartment between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m. when the thief broke in and took the set of wheels.

Speaks Latin?

An apparent gang member, just out of jail and desperate to see his mother, held up a MasterCard and claiming he had a gun on Dec. 4.

The victim told cops that he was standing in front of his building, which is between Union and Lorimer Streets at just after midnight when the thief came up and said, "I just got out of prison."

The victim approached him and claimed to be a member of the Latin gang.

He asked for money so he could go to see his daughter, but when the man refused, the supposed gang member got angry, saying, "If you don't give

me money, I'm going to pull out my gun and shoot you."

That was apparently enough to get the man to surrender his cash — all of \$11.

The gang-banger pulled out the man's ID card from the wallet and said, "Now I know

where you live — so are you going to call the cops?"

The victim said, "No," but did just that.

Cops are looking for a 5-foot-8, 160-pound white Hispanic man with brown eyes and curly black hair.

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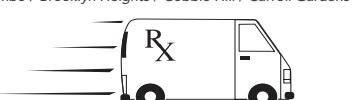
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Newspaper of the Year 4 PSZ

SHOP

Continued from page 3

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KITCHEN SINK

Our editor caught the **Life in a Blender** on **TV** on **North Shore last Sunday** and pronounced it the "best concert of the year." Our theory is that he was satisfied because lead singer **David Lee Roth** was on stage to play "What Happened to Smith" the band's signature anthem, after our boys screamed it out four times. So here's a justifiable excuse by the new **Urban Market** about to open on **Seventh Avenue** between **12th and 13th streets**, but what's with the large **plastic-saucer** **TV** in the window? That's a support, not the "Today" show studio... Looks like **Brooklyn Industries** is going to double its space by moving to a new **store**, which is leaving the corner of **Seventh Avenue and Ninth Street** and moving a few doors away. Heard a great tip from one of our spies: **Face** between **Seventh and Eighth Avenues** is a great place to stretch your legs this day. One guy told us that he got a massage that worked great. And this week, we spotted a great table and some classic books.

Stop@BrooklynPaper.com

Correction
Wrong signage

In a front page article, "City bans sign language" (Nov. 24), The Brooklyn Paper misidentified the man in the photo who was holding up a picture of a ticket he received from the city. It was Ansonia Chemist co-owner Dennis DiSimone. The Paper regrets the error.



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After 25 years of decorating our lampposts, the snowflakes will blossom (to mix metaphors) all over Park Slope! Follow the snowflakes soon appearing in the windows of participating vendors, and remember . . . there's no place like home!

Please feel free to contact Rebecca at buyinbrooklyn@gmail.com if you have questions, or ideas to help publicize this potentially magical night!

Shop Local Factoid # 307: Shifting just \$100 of your holiday shopping to local vendors has a tremendous benefit to your local economy, which ultimately benefits the whole community (you included!). Plus it's fun and easy!



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City can't curb Yards security

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

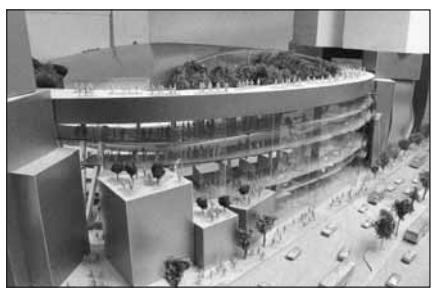
Elected officials and community groups again attacked the city, stating developer Forest City Ratner for the controversial refusal to disclose how the plan to secure the proposed Atlantic Yards basketball arena when it is slated to open in 2010.

A group of elected officials joined the Council Brooklyn Neighborhoods on the steps of City Hall last Thursday to demand an independent security audit of Atlantic Yards. The APL broadcast a recent New York Times story that finally reported what many opponents of the project had suspected: that the proposed glass-walled arena is only 20 feet from the street along Flatbush and Atlantic avenues.

The group believes that the arena's proximity to the street will require busy roadsides to be closed on game nights — a nightmarish traffic scenario.

This comes just a week earlier this year when New York City officials surprised many by announcing they would close off streets around the city's new glass-all-the-way arena, which is 25 feet from the street.

"They need to answer why they're doing this in Newark, but here in Brooklyn Goldstein has the problem of the Don't Destroy Brooklyn, one of the groups that joined state Sen. Velmanette Montgomery (D-Prospect Heights), Assemblyman Tony Avella (D-Cobble Hill), Assemblyman Jim Brennan (D-Park Slope),



An early rendering of the Frank Gehry-designed basketball arena shows just how close the glass-walled building will be to Flatbush and Atlantic avenues.

FOIL-ed! State says it can't talk security

The Brooklyn Paper

In October, The Brooklyn Paper filed a Freedom of Information Law request for all documents related to security planning at Atlantic Yards by the Empire State Development Corporation.

Last week, we finally got our long-sought documents. So what did they contain to A 10-page addendum from a Forest City Ratner security consultant that explained why all the plans must be kept classified.

"It is critical to the security of the arena and neighbors, that this information be maintained in strict confidence and not be disclosed to anyone other than the design professionals involved in development of the Project, and appropriate law enforcement agencies," consultant Jeff Venter argued.

Consider that: we had asked for documentation of the security height-security situation at Atlantic Yards and were sent, instead, a document explaining why we had to remain in the dark.

And that isn't good public policy, said John Goering, a public affairs professor at Baruch College.

"I think that some bureaucrat at ESDC decided to snub the press doesn't surprise me," he said. "But I see no reason why there can't be a public discussion on it."

In addition to not fulfilling The Paper's information request, ESDC compensated \$9 for copying costs. We are working on the agency's request. — Mike McLaughlin

DUFFIELD...

Continued from page 1

Brooklyn Plan, and is an important incentive to attract private investment.

In a last-ditch effort to appease preservationists, the city named Duffield Street "Abolitionist Place" in September and promised \$2 million to commemorate Abolitionist activity on the street.

Consulting Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene), said the co-naming was a nice gesture, but that the houses should still be preserved.

Following last week's settlement, Chatel thanked the mayor "for listening to our plea."

Lawyer Jennifer Levy, who represented Chatel, speculated that the city decided to settle because it "was the fastest way to continue development, and they realized they could redraw the [park] plans pretty easily."

The future of the other six houses, which might be condemned during a different phase of the Downtown Brooklyn Plan, remains up in the air.

The city, meanwhile, declared itself happy with the results.

"The city is pleased that this litigation was resolved in a manner that avoided a lengthy and costly legal proceeding, making room to proceed with its plan for commercial and residential growth in Downtown Brooklyn, together with the mayor's initiative to commemorate the area's abolitionist history," said Law Department spokesman Kate Ament.

Chatel this week declared this week that "Willoughby Square will move forward and will, in time, become one of the great public spaces in one of the fastest growing urban centers in America."

With Joy Chatel's house anchoring the southwest corner, that is.

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The Brooklyn Paper

KIDS • SCHOOL • STYLE • TEENS • CAMPS • MUSIC

PARENT

Celebrations change, holidays stay the same

Smartmom ran into Painter
Mom at Starbucks on Sev-
enth Avenue. "The kids expect it."

Painter Mom said, and for some
reason Smartmom knew exactly

what she meant.

Painter Mom told Smartmom
that back when her kids were lit-
tle and she wasn't working, she
made her a big deal of it. "I would
make them sit like the world is
twinkling lights. The cakes
and pies on a table set with festive
fabrics and candles. A real
winter wonderland in their Park

Slope brownstone.

"Now I'm stuck," Painter
Mom said. "The kids expect it."

Painter Mom had spent her days

preparing in her studio
for exhibits and her kids
are now busy teenagers.

Smartmom asked if it was pos-
sible to modify some of their ex-
pectations about Christmas?

Then again, that might be

too much. It would probably make

the world a better place if the world

is a cold, dark place without the

light of their mother's Christmas.

The conversation with Painter

Mom made Smartmom think

about Hepcat's mother. Artsy
Grandma, who has always created

a picture perfect Christmas on

the farm in Northern California,

just like her mother did before

her, could be the one to do it.

Artsy Grandma, her daughter

and Hepcat's Christmas in San

Francisco.

Then again, maybe it's not

so bad. Disappointment happens.

In recent years, Smartmom

had told that Hepcat's mom was

exhausted at Christmas time and

had the kind of other interesting

and creative projects go

on.

It's a labor-intensive affair.

Artsy Grandma is up

all night on Christmas

Eve putting the final touches

on her decorations.

She thought that if she

didn't do it, her chil-

dren would be disappointed.

He thought that if he

didn't spend at home, Eve

would be disappointed.

He thought that if he

didn't go to the beach, Eve

would be disappointed.

He thought that if he

didn't go to the beach, Eve

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Donut shopper socks counterman

By Gersh Kuntzman

The Brooklyn Paper

At about 4 a.m. this day near the corner of Fifth Avenue and Ninth Street punched an employee after being told he had to wait in line on Nov. 26.

The 19-year-old counterman told police that a 19-year-old man entered at around midnight, approached the register and said, "Make me a flamin' sandwich." When the counterman told him to get in line, he balked, started an argument, brandished the glass tip jar and screamed, "I'll kick you in the balls."

He then hurled the tip jar at the employee, injuring him in the right elbow, cops said. The flamin' sandwich was the impatient sandwich he wanted, indeed, he'd applied for a job at the donut store a week ago.

Cops are looking for him.

Cash back?

A cashier at a Fifth Avenue supermarket enjoyed her job as it allowed her to claim \$5 off of a handful of purchases — until, of course, a customer noticed and she was arrested on Nov. 26.

Cops say the 17-year-old employee of the supermarket, which is between Park and Steward places, had been stealing more than off the register, or at least from customers, dating back to Oct. 30 before one noticed and complained.

Cops arrived and collared the

DuGraw Street resident, who told police, implausibly, "I requested cash back" from the customers.

She was charged with grand larceny, despite the low dollar amount of the crime.

Quick thief

A fast-moving purse-snatcher netted \$600 when he stole a woman's handbag at the corner of Fourth Avenue and Ninth Street.

The 50-year-old victim told cops that she was on the corner at around 5 a.m. when the thief struck, so quickly that she did not get a good look at him.

The tenant of the apartment, which is between Fifth and Sixth Streets, told cops he came home, later, after midnight, to find that his back window was ajar and the rings, valued at \$100 each, were gone.

Two days later on the same corner, another thief nabbed a woman's handbag, but the 10 am crime didn't earn the mugger anything except his victim's bi-polar medication, cops said.

Feed the kid

A mugger, using a cellphone to simulate a gun, ordered a woman to hand over all her cash and credit cards to "feed my kids" on Nov. 30.

But the kids won't get such a lavish meal, as did the only \$2. The victim, a 22-year-old South Street resident, told cops that she had just left the Fourth Avenue subway station at around 6:30 pm when the mugger struck.

He stuck what she thought was a gun into her back, and said, "Give me your money. I

have to feed my kids."

She turned over \$2 — all she had — and the perp, whom cops described as a 5-foot-7 white Hispanic man, fled on Seventh Street towards Third Avenue, cops said.

It is unclear how cops know the threatening object was a cellphone and not a gun.

Lord of rings

A thief broke into a apartment on Tony Prospect Park West and walked off with two gold-and-sapphire rings on Nov. 30, cops said.

The tenant of the apartment, which is between Fifth and Sixth Streets, told cops he came home, later, after midnight, to find that his front door unlocked and his window open.

He soon discovered something much worse: a thief had pilfered nearly a dozen pieces of family jewelry, including \$20,000 in diamonds, a \$15,000 bracelet, necklace and earring set and a \$1,200 ring.

To add insult to larceny, the

78th PRECINCT

Hot rocks

Philadelphia resident — told cops that the Brooklyn bandit exhibited no brotherly love when he broke into the 2007 Chevy Silverado and took a couple of two iPads, a satellite-guided map and a wallet containing \$30.

Starry eyed

A native of California, who was in Park Slope shooting a movie, found out on Nov. 24 that when you're in the big city, you just can't leave your mes-senger bag sitting around.

The 39-year-old Venice, California, resident told police that she had put down the bag on 12th Street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, around 10 p.m. But when she looked for it — and the fancy Apple computer it contained — a few hours later, it was gone.

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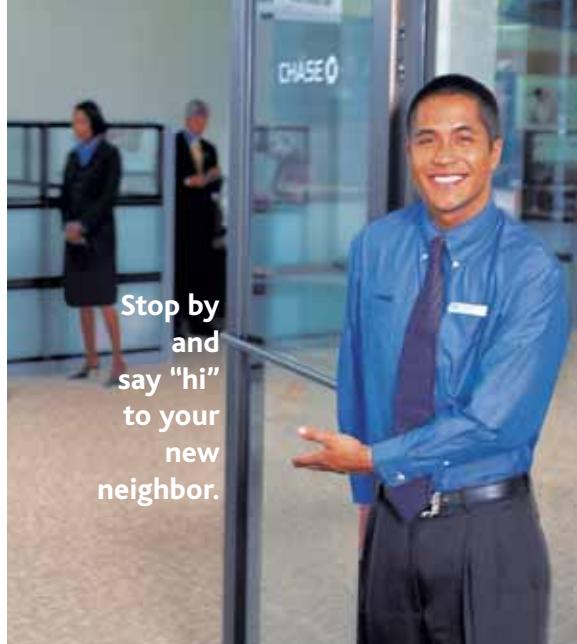
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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

December 8, 2007

Boutique bedding

Hotel Le Bleu opens just in time to welcome your holiday guests

By Tina Barry
for The Brooklyn Paper

Now that the holiday season is upon us, visits from your family and friends are imminent. And while you may be looking forward to clinking glasses of eggnog together, finding closet space for your visitors' luggage and putting sheets on the sofa bed is a much less appealing prospect — for you and your in-laws.

As the search for a place to stay begins, there are many appealing alternatives in Brooklyn. [See sidebar.] Over the weekend, my husband I were welcomed into the swank Hotel Le Bleu, the border of Gowanus and Park Slope, which bills itself as "a whole new world of über-chic glamour and luxurious living." It's an option for your discriminating in-laws or pals.

Opened just last month, the first self-proclaimed "boutique" hotel in Brooklyn has found a niche spot for its discerning clientele: The not-so-lovely Fourth Avenue. Flanking the shiny silver and white building: A Staples store and a taxi depot.

While the location is an unusual choice, hotel General Manager Robert Gaeta maintains that it's a great base. Globally, he notes, "International is simply 'above the curve.'

"Everyone knows the neighborhood is on the precipice of change," Gaeta said, noting that Novo, a multi-story condominium, is being built across the street. In addition to new

high-rises under construction, Gaeta cited Fifth Avenue as an attraction.

"Of all the Brooklyn neighborhoods they could have chosen," he said, "Park Slope has the most restaurants, coffee stores and high-music venues has the wide variety in terms of activity." True enough. Yet, over the months I watched the hotel evolve on the long stretch of the still-seedy avenue; I had my doubts.

Pricey Fourth Avenue?

And I kept having them after I heard the rates. According to Gaeta, Le Bleu's rooms begin at \$270 and don't go a penny over \$399. "This is Brooklyn and not Manhattan, so I think the hotel can go well above that.

But the sight of the front lobby, where we pulled into the small parking area in front of the hotel, where a bonded reception could be spotted behind the glass. Nor was it quiet beyond the sight of the front lobby.

It was time to walk through the foyer, where one is invited to conduct "discreet business tête-à-têtes," do it during the day, when the sun warms the space, or arrive before your guest and meet in the room.

Compared to the entrance at night, supermarket lighting looks flattering.

I was uneasy on the ride up with the bellman, who carried my husband's bag but not mine.

THE BED AND BREAKFAST ON THE PARK

113 Prospect Park West at Seventh Street in Park Slope. (718) 765-1115, www.bbbyb.com.

Room rate: \$183 per night during the week and \$200 per weekend night.

Amenities: Jacuzzi in some rooms, game room, library, parking, valet parking, complimentary Southern breakfast.

Parking: Street parking only.

Subway: C to Utica Avenue.

ATLANTIC INN

1768 Atlantic Ave. at Utica Avenue in Crown Heights. (718) 771-7171, www.atlanticinnbrooklyn.com.

Room rate: \$102 and up per night during the week and \$146 and up per weekend night.

Brooklyn hotels, bed & breakfasts

AKWAABA MANSION

349 McDonald Ave. at Stuyvesant Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant. (718) 239-1111, www.akwaabamansion.com.

Room rate: \$183 per night during the week and \$200 per weekend night.

Amenities: Jacuzzi in some rooms, game room, library, parking, valet parking, complimentary Southern breakfast.

Parking: Street parking only.

Subway: C to Utica Avenue.

THE AWESOME BED AND BREAKFAST

136 Lawrence St. at Willoughby Street in Downtown Brooklyn. (718) 859-4859, www.awesomedb.com.

Room rate: \$130 per night during the week and \$185 per weekend night.

Amenities: Free wireless internet and cable television, king-size non-smoking room, complimentary continental breakfast.

Parking: Street parking only.

Subway: 2 and 3 to Hoyt Street.

THE BED AND BREAKFAST ON THE PARK

113 Prospect Park West at Seventh Street in Park Slope. (718) 765-1115, www.bbbyb.com.

Room rate: \$175 per night during the week and \$225 per weekend night.

Amenities: Complimentary breakfast, park views, claw foot tubs, working fireplaces. One room has a private rooftop garden with skyline views.

Parking: Street parking only.

Subway: F to Seventh Avenue.

BEST WESTERN

331 Hoyt Street at 83rd Street in Bay Ridge. (718) 238-3737, www.bestwestern.com.

Room rate: \$214.95 per night during the week and \$279.95 per weekend night.

Amenities: Free wireless internet and cable television, king-size non-smoking room, complimentary continental breakfast.

Parking: Street parking only.

Subway: 2 and 3 to Hoyt Street.



Stylish accommodations: Among the bed and breakfasts and hotels in Brooklyn, Hotel Le Bleu, which opened last month, sets itself apart with its "boutique" status. Designer Andreas Escobar added extra blue to the guest rooms by making the occupant of the shower stall visible through clear glass.

Bleu pep show

Finally, the term "boutique" started making sense as we walked to our room. Exiting the elevator, I noticed a silver sign against a chocolate brown wall, with the floor's number 10 above our Cheesecake stall. The lighting was moody, and the designer, Andreas Escobar of the eponymous Montreal-based firm, was careful to use texture throughout the building to create a sense of drama.

It's a room that's modestly sized — although not glitch free — was easy and amusing. Escobar has found a way to utilize every inch of the limited space in each of the 48 rooms. The designer carved out an efficient work area equipped with standard perks like Internet, as well as an iPod docking station. The king-size bed is a bit of a stretch, but it's a good one, like a theater of sorts — to watch the 42-inch plasma TV with Sony DSD system and anytime-you-want-it-HBO (the selection of drama, classics and comedies is fairly limited, while the pony movies are vast).

This is a room that functions perfectly for a quick hookup or as a getaway for couples who know each other well. I've shared a bathroom with my husband for 23 years, and yet, I felt like a peep show performer in the large, clear glass shower stall that juts into the room — as I'm sure Escobar intended. (A

See LE BLEU on page 11

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MUSIC

Santa's slay

Most everyone whom GO Brooklyn knows is asking for a *Ninendo Wi-Fi Santa* this year, but if the Tiger Lillies have their way, we'll all be getting "Suicide for Christmas."

The trio of musicians, known for an annual Halloween show at St. Ann's Warehouse, a macabre project like "Black-headed Peter," an opera that assigns cruel punishments for children's vices, is turning its eye to Christmas with its latest show, which opens at St. Ann's on Dec. 13.

"When I was a small child, I was a firm believer in Santa Claus and enjoyed the morning like no other," said Martyn Jacques, the group's founder, via e-mail from Greece. "As one gets older, the best you can hope for is a sense of indifference, [of] feeling succulent."

So, with a sharp tongue and healthy sense of the absurd, Jacques and bandmates Adrian Hug and Adrian Stout composed the show, which is meant to turn the holiday tradition of Rockettes and nut-crackers on their head.

"We thought it might be funny to do a whole show based on suicide," quipped Jacques.

So, if your idea of holiday cheer is "It's a Wonderful Life," this might not be the show for you. "It's a show that people who hate Christmas should come to and not feel all the cheer and the love and the energy and the glee," Jacques said. "There will be lots of elves committing suicide as our stage decoration."

"Suicide for Christmas" will be performed at 8 pm on Dec. 13, 14 and 15 at St. Ann's Warehouse (38 Water St. at Dock Street in DUMBO). Tickets are \$32.50. For information, call (718) 254-8779 or visit www.stannswarehouse.org.

— Daniel Goldberg

CINEMA

'Match' point

Look out, Cannes! It was only last week that the Gotham Awards brought film superstars like Uma Thurman and Kyra Sedgwick to Brooklyn, yet the borough is already gearing up for another exciting cinematic competition: the Brooklyn Heights Jewish Film Festival.

Now in its fourth year, the festival was created by Weinstein Congregation B'nai Avraham as a way to start a dialogue with people who may not be comfortable coming to a religious service or event.

"We want to celebrate art as a way to explore Jewish identity," he said. "We always draw in a nice crowd this time of year, right around Hanukkah and Christmas."

The 2007 lineup kicks off on Dec. 8 with "Match and Marry," a look at a modern-day matchmaker in New York, and continues with "Yippie: A Journey to Jewish Joy," filmmaker Paul Mazursky's documentary (produced by the author of *My Promised Land*) about the pilgrimage of Hasidic Jews to Uman in the Ukraine (screening on Saturday, Dec. 15); and "Creating Harmony: The Displaced Persons Orchestra From St. Otilien," which follows an orchestra whose players are also Holocaust survivors (screening on Sunday, Dec. 16).

"Some of the films we're showing have never been shown before in Brooklyn," said Weinstein, who chose the movies, in part, because of their positive messages for all filmmakers.

"There are different types of Judaism," he said, "but they're all of the same Mosaic."

The Brooklyn Heights Jewish Film Festival begins with "Match and Marry" at 8 pm on Saturday, Dec. 8 at Congregation B'nai Avraham (117 Remsen St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights). Tickets to each event are \$5 and reservations are recommended. For more information and a complete schedule, call (718) 596-4820.

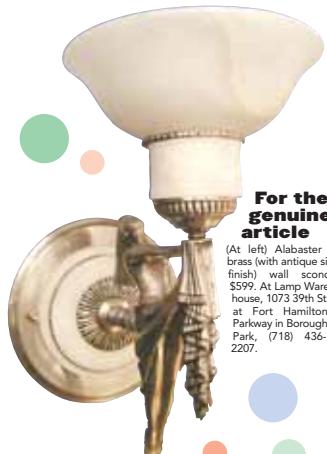
— Daniel Goldberg



Holiday gift guide

Mom & pops offer unique gifts for your whole list

By Adam Rathe and Lisa J. Curtis



For the genuine article

(At left) Alabaster and brass (with antique silver finish) wall sconce, \$599. At Lamp Warehouse, 1073 39th St. at Fort Hamilton Parkway in Borough Park, (718) 436-2207.

For the at-home barista

(At right) Zassenhouse coffee mill, \$59.99. At Zassenhouse Housewares, 85 Court St. at Hoyt Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 243-0844.



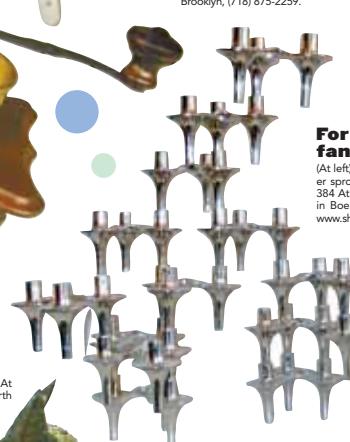
For the urban equestrian

(At left) Wrangler denim Christmas stocking, \$15. At Debbie's Reins and Things, 322 Douglass St. at Fourth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 797-5288.



For the winter sportsman

(Above) Paris Champion Fastback wooden sled, \$99. At Sid's Hardware and Home Center, 345 Jay St. at Willoughby Street in Downtown Brooklyn, (718) 875-2259.



For the Lego fanatic

(At left) Global Views candleholder sprockets, \$20 each. At Rico, 384 Atlantic Ave. at Bond Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 797-2077, www.shoprico.com.



For the serious chef

(At right) Kikuchi Tsuchine seven-inch all-purpose knife, \$204. At The Brooklyn Kitchen, 616 Lorimer St. at Skillman Avenue in Williamsburg, (718) 389-2982, www.thebrooklynkitchen.com.



For the pet-deprived

(At left) Greenpiece moss-on-frame dog topiary, \$170. At Dig, 479 Atlantic Ave. at Nevins Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 554-0207, www.gardendig.com.



For stylish storage

(Below) Baijia hand-blown glass vase, \$160. At Jewels by Satnick, 187 State St. at Court Street in Downtown Brooklyn, (718) 852-1421.



For the stylish scribbler

(Above) Antioch jacket journal, \$13.95. At Court Street Office Supplies, 44 Court St. at Joralemon Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 625-5771.



For the young

(Above) Singing Bear with eight pieces of milk chocolate Hanukkah gelt, \$30. At JoMart Chocolates, 2917 Ave. R at Nostrand Avenue in Marine Park, (718) 375-1277, www.jomartchocolates.com.



For the chocoholic

(At left) Jacques Torres Chocolate Pure Bliss fudge brownie mix from King Arthur Flour, \$12.95. At Jacques Torres Chocolate, 66 Water St. at Main Street in DUMBO, (718) 875-9772.

Floor 'em

(At left) Shop "Impressions" orbit pattern olefin rug, 5-feet, 5-inches by 7-feet, 8-inches, \$380. Available in a variety of sizes and prices. At Boro Rug & Carpet, 1141 37th St. at Fort Hamilton Parkway in Borough Park, (718) 853-3600, www.bororug.com.



For the fitness buff

(At left) Gift certificates available in any denomination. At Harbor Fitness, 191 15th St. between Fourth and Fifth Aves. in Bay Ridge, (718) 965-6200, and 9215 Fourth Ave. between 92nd and 93rd streets in Bay Ridge, (718) 238-9400, www.harborfitness.com.

**LE BLEU...**

Continued from page 9
sheer white curtain can be pulled around the glass for the inhibited.)

Where's the booze?

After turning on the TV and seeing "Hello, Barry," Tina" on the screen, I decided to get out for a while and see just how convenient the hotel was to the Slope's nightlife.

We headed to the still-lovely French bistro Coconuts on Fifth Avenue and 58th Street. If we had opted for an evening in Manhattan, the M, R, and F trains are a five-minute walk from the hotel. (For anyone who is interested, Sunday is BYOB at Coconuts with no corkage fee.)

Back at the hotel, I opened the little refrigerator in the room, expecting a stocked mini-bar. (After all, the hotel claims to "reflect the needs of sophisticated global travelers.") Imagine my surprise upon finding just two bottles of Le Bleu water.

Also missing at the moment is the Vue, the two-story cocktail bar and restaurant that's slated to occupy the eighth and ninth floors of the hotel by late spring. Guests said the Vue's menu will be "surprising."

"They like steaks," he said of Chris and Eddie Arias, who will operate the eatery. My husband and I got ready for bed, washing, rinsing and moisturizing with the array of

organic toiletries provided. The "soothing-free goose down comforter" looked inviting, and the "special woven Egyptian cotton linens with 250 thread count" felt like silk.

LODGING

Hotel Le Bleu (370 Fourth Ave., between Third and Fifth streets in Park Slope) accepts American Express, Diners Club, Discover, MasterCard, Visa, MasterCard, \$270-\$359. To reserve, call (718) 625-1500 or visit www.hotelbleu.com.

This is the point in the story when I walk to the door and hang the "Do Not Disturb" sign on the knobs. Cut to an orchid in the (flower is a signature of the hotel) sun setting over, well, not the Gowanus, and you know the rest.

HOTELS...

Continued from page 9

Subway: R to 86th St on-site.

Subway: R to 86th St on-site.

Parking: Free on-site.

Subway: R to Carroll Street.

COMFORT INN

140 Hamilton Ave. at Bowery Street in Carroll Gardens, (718) 873-2500, www.comfortinn.com

Room rate: \$107.17 per night during the week and \$129.22 per weekend night.

Amenities: On-site coffee and snack machine, coin laundry, payphone, fax machine, fax machine, premium TV channels.

Parking: Free on-site parking.

Subway: R to Carroll Street.

HARBOR MOTOR INN

178 Butler St. at Nevins Street in Gowanus, (718) 855-9600, www.comfortinn.com

Rooms: \$149 and up per night.

Amenities: Complimentary breakfast, wireless Internet, payphone, fax machine, free local calls, 24-hour concierge service.

Parking: \$24 per day on-site.

Subway: R to Nevins Street in Gowanus.

COMFORT INN EXPRESS

3218 Emmons Ave. between Gayle and Bragg Streets in Sheepshead Bay, (718) 368-3334, www.comfortinn.com

Room rate: \$107 per night during the week and \$129 per weekend night.

Amenities: Ergonomic beds with orthopaedic mattresses, 300-thread count Egyptian sheets and down pillows, complimentary Bose DVD/CD player and high-speed Internet.

Parking: Free on-site parking.

Subway: R to Sheepshead Bay.

ROOMS: R to Union Street

Subway: R to Union Street.

Parking: Free on-site.

Subway: R to Union Street.

Subway: R to Carroll Street.

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The Brooklyn Paper Photo by Mark Lennihan

Diner dash

Visiting Bklyn's endangered outposts of comfort food

By Bryan Rucker
For the Brooklyn Paper

The sad news came in September. St. Clair Restaurant, a diner and Borsari Hill institution since 1967, had closed. The ownership and lease were to be completely removed in order to better fit into the increasingly upscale Smith Street.

Now I like tasting menus and wine pairings as much as the next guy, but if any street in Brooklyn needs an unpretentious diner, it's Smith Street. Hip Grocer, Saul and Chestnut may have revolutionized the local food scene, but the "farmers" diners and Michelin stars in the world can't buy you a plate of date-fries and \$4 martinis.

But just last couple of weeks, I've traveled all across the borough to pay tribute to the kind of old-fashioned diners and coffee shops that will never be mistaken for hip.

Arch Diner

This is the Flushing-Cassarose border, technically accessible by the B47 bus, but its huge parking lot illustrates that southeastern Brooklyn's preferred mode of transportation is indeed the automobile. Swathed in neon and silver, the Arch looks like it's 1950s all the way inside, and it's no wonder it's turned to the oldies station for added legitimacy. (Surprisingly, the Arch Diner didn't open until 1974.)

I ordered the rolled strawberry pancakes, which technically were not rolled, but folded and bunched with super-sweet strawberry pie filling both inside and on top.

Upon asking a busboy whether they take credit cards, I got a non-committal "Not yet." "Not yet?" my waiter cracked.

"He doesn't understand anything," The staff at Applewood is never that funny.

Arch Diner (1866 Ralph Ave. at Flatlands Avenue in Flushing) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Dinner entrées: \$8.95-\$16.95. The eatery is open 24 hours a day. Subway: R to 86th Street.

Bridgeview Diner

I never thought I would feel underdressed in a diner, but the tuxedoed

hosts at Gus Pandel's Bay Ridge restaurant made me second-guessing my gap hoodie.

Open since 1981 but looking brand new, its renovated booths and subdued atmosphere make the Bridgeview a perfect place to tuck into a hearty lunch or dinner. The menu ups the ante, but all, and through the "chicken fantasia" (chicken breast, mushrooms, tomatoes, antichokes, wine cream sauce) sounded tempting. I settled on a tuna and hard-boiled egg triple-decker served with a delightfully chive-heavy potato salad.

The highlight, though, was the

colossal (I mean, I mean,

the farmer's) diner throwaway.

Bridgeview's recipe is

creamy, crunchy and addictive sweet.

Bridgeview Diner is open 24 hours a day. Subway: R to 86th Street.

Kellong's Diner

Serving Williamsburg for 80 years, Kellong's is the neighborhood's greatest, most sanitized neighborhood.

The patrons come in two varieties: skinnily hipster (burger and fries) and Slavic construction worker (steak and chips). The menu is simple, with items on top: mashed potatoes, broccoli.

Although the ravenous blue booths and red tables added some life to the proceedings, primary colors could only distract me from the food. The best thing I can say about Kellong's is that it's a little French toast that is at least if completed the color wheel.

Open for 25 years, most of the patrons are as old as old, and many of them knew each other, sidling up to their neighbor's table and shooting the breeze.

You're adventurous, try the cheese blintz platter charbroiled,

smothered in a green pesto with peach

avocados and cottage cheese topped with

old-fashioned granola flakes.

I'll stick to the curly fries.

Kings Plaza Diner (4124 Ave. U between Hendrickson and Coleman streets in Marine Park) accepts Amer-

ican Express, MasterCard and Visa. Dinner entrées: \$13.95-\$24.95. The eatery is open daily, 6 am-2 am. Bus: B2, B3, B5, B41, B46, B47 to Kings Plaza. For more information, call (718) 951-6700.

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Park Plaza Restaurant

Nick Likourentzos and his family have owned this diner near the Brooklyn Bridge for all of its 25 years, and he and his wife, Anna, are one of the regulars by name. Walking up and down the aisles, they greet their aging customers like family, checking in and making sure everything is perfect. My homemade coconut cake nearly wailed with whipped cream and lightened with a dash that I could easily have ordered a second.

The Park Plaza looks like your grandparents' house, strew with potted plants and a fireplace. Its lone concession to modernity were a television along some of the booths promising "Dinavision: Bringing you music videos, games, television, and more."

By the time I visited in late November, and after the holidays, the walls and a six-foot Christmas tree stood by the door. Above the bar hangs a "Happy Hanukkah" sign, an inclusive gesture in an inclusive place.

Park Plaza Restaurant (2029 Cadman Plaza West, between Flatbush and Brooklyn Hospital) accepts American Express, Carte Blanche, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. Dinner entrées: \$9.95 to \$22.95. Open 7 am-1:30 am Sunday through Thursday; 7 am-2:30 am Friday and Saturday. Subway: B to 4th Street and Clark Street. Parking lot available for \$2 per hour with a two-hour maximum. For more information, call (718) 596-5900 or www.parkplazarestaurant.com.

Vegas Diner

Sadly, I found no slot machines upon entering this misleadingly named establishment, which opened in 1982. Although its wood paneling and potted plants are reminiscent of the very Brady '70s, the huge "These Colors Don't Run" American flag on the back wall transports me right back to 2001.

Vegas Diner (1619 86th St. between Flatbush and Bay Ridge Street in Bensonhurst) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Dinner entrées: \$11.95-\$22.95. Open 24 hours a day. Subway: D to 18th Avenue. For more information, call (718) 331-2221.

My only other experience with this place: New York gut brace — fries smothered in American cheese and thick brown gravy — was heated at three in the morning after a night of "discoing." Daisy's version is so good, I finished it with cold sober.

Daisy's Diner (452 Fifth Ave. between Ninth and 10th streets in Park Slope) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Dinner entrées: \$6.95-\$14.95. The eatery is open 24 hours a day. Subway: R to 86th Street or R to Ninth Street. For more information, call (718) 788-1438.

Kings Plaza Diner

"The place is dead," the health inspector told me as I sat down. "The health inspector's here."

Nick Stathos' Kings Plaza Diner must have passed the inspection with flying colors because my curvy friend came out in 15 minutes — tops. With skinny hips, she was in size and scope, curly fries might seem a better choice, but they were perfectly greasy, spicy and piping hot.

Open for 25 years, most of the patrons are as old as old, and many of them knew each other, sidling up to their neighbor's table and shooting the breeze.

You're adventurous, try the cheese blintz platter charbroiled, smothered in a green pesto with peach avocados and cottage cheese topped with old-fashioned granola flakes.

I'll stick to the curly fries.

Kings Plaza Diner (4124 Ave. U between Hendrickson and Coleman streets in Marine Park) accepts Amer-

Disco grannies: The disco fries at Daisy's Diner, above, are covered in melted cheese and gravy, and have kept the devoted clientele, right, streaming into this Park Slope landmark since 1935.

lives on. Although the "brick oven" that the awning promises looks suspiciously like a plain old box to us, the pizza and specialties — like the crazy legendary "pork roll with pimento" — are still mighty fine. Not into pizza? Marzenka's has an entire counter dedicated to Polish fare.

Marzenka's (a hearty welcome to the groovy menu, now featuring an Indian buffet, at the former **D Space** location at the corner of Jay and Front streets in DUMBO, which is rumored to now be called **Marrakesh Express**...but would you? for \$6 you can fill a takeout carton and have more than enough for lunch.

Got a hot dining tip? Drop us a line at BreakingChews@BrooklynPaper.com.

— Adam Rathe

Much like Moses coming down Mt. Sinai with the 10 Commandments, restaurant guru Tim Zagat has come to his people with the "Best of Brooklyn" guide. The slim volume features 216 restaurants, 141 bars and clubs, 213 gyms and fitness centers, and a whole lot more. And while GO Brooklyn normally prefers the sage wisdom of Tim Zagat, he gives raves to institutions like Peter Luger and Di Faro, but knows that newcomers like Po and Lucali are great, too.

Meanwhile up the street, tannin

Yankee can pick up a copy at **Barnes and Noble** (106 Court St. at State Street in Downtown Brooklyn).

If the food isn't up to par, try the trick for Pratt Students, beginning Dec. 10, they'll have a new spot to fuel up at **Autoroute du Monde** (860 Fulton St. at Clinton Avenue in Fort Green) with service from French fries and mixing cocktails for neighborhood sophisticates and thirsty students alike.

Now those hungry Fort Greene residents want to learn what to do with all of those sundries, they should head over to the Brooklyn baked goods.

Me while up the street, tannin

Yankee Bennett and Jason Richardson, who founded the **Greenvelope** guide, are opening a new storefront at the corner of Fulton Street and South Portland Avenue in January. The shop, in the former South Portland Antiques location, will stock high-end groceries and will give the neighborhood a dining destination.

Now those hungry Fort Greene residents want to learn what to do with all of those sundries, they should head over to the Brooklyn baked goods.

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Meanwhile up the street, tannin

Yankee

Yankee</p

King for a day

Bedford-Stuyvesant songstress gets ready to take the pop star throne

By Adam Rathe

The Brooklyn Paper

Kelly King's debut album is called "Live The Dream," and the pop singer, hailing from Bedford-Stuyvesant via Nashville, seems to be on the job.

Her single, "I Don't Wanna Sing That Song," is rising up the Adult Contemporary charts, and she has plans to begin touring in 2008 with an as-yet-unnamed "major" headliner. But like Whitney Houston and Beyoncé, King's path to the pop charts began closer to candlelight than the spotlight.

"I started singing because my mother had a singer in her church choir and every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday we were there," said King, in an exclusive interview with GO Brooklyn at the Roebling Tea Room. "From that time, I could run around on my own two feet, I was always singing." King was leaping her mother's choir in a rendition of "Silent Night," and at age 6, she began performing professionally.

"I've been in bars and clubs as long as I can remember. My

parents are very into music and the scene in Nashville is just like that. I think all of my energy towards singing, but unlike other showbiz kids who never left the church, I think it is all business when she's at a bar."

"I've never had a drink, done drugs or smoked," said

MUSIC

Kelly King's "Live the Dream" is available from www.amazon.com for \$16.98. For information, visit www.kellykingsg.com.

King, who is in her early 20s, May 2007, is a young woman on the scene from such a young age that I never wanted to be like that."

Like Beyoncé, King had to start at the bottom.

"I tried in Nashville. And while Madonna was a coat check girl at the 1980s, King managed to land a record deal and become a rather impressive first job on her first try."

"I was offered a contract to perform on a cruise ship that passed through New York City each week. I figured that I would get a ship for six months, and that 3,000 people were on each week, so there had to be a chance that someone would notice me," she said.

"I was the lead singer on the ship, so I made a home for myself in New York, even from a very young age," she said. "I had a fake Broadway street sign [hangin' on the wall] ... I was always Broadway-bound."

But while her talent was growing, King herself had stopped. At only 5-foot-2, finding work as a dancer would be a tall order.

"I realized my

talent, and I stopped dancing.

King has the range and

the

King has the range and
the
ability of Mariah Carey, and
as of now, she has none of the
crazy, Add Mariah's
operatic talents to...

The dancing queen of Aussie superstar Kylie Minogue's hit record "Fever" — We just can't get her out of our head, especially if you're in a pinch of...

Good old country music
girl "I'm a Fool" could
be Pam Clinton's "Walkin'
After Midnight" for a new
generation. Add 'em to
gether, and you'll get...

Kelly King's "Live the
Dream."



King's country: Pop singer Kelly King chatted about what it takes to climb the charts on Nov. 9 at the Roebling Tea Room in Williamsburg.

Armchair art in DUMBO

There's a new gallery on the scene in DUMBO, and it brings more to the table than just pricey prints and free merit. In fact, it actually brings the table.

Quincy Ballon opened GalleryOB in October, and it's quickly become the hot spot for design savvy locals looking to outfit their swanky new digs.

The gallery sells exquisite pieces such as \$300 hand-

beaded African figures (pictured), and mixes them with

vintage with splashy, gilded sculptures and

large, bright colors.

Because I'm located

in the DUMBO market and not Manhattan, I can offer

similar items and in

some cases at a

reduced rate," said Ballon

(pronounced "ball-un")

who lives just a block

away from his

store.

And the inventory is enough to make any trend-chasing aficionado green with envy. With a zebra wood desk with lacquered goat-skin top by

Carl Springer, a rounded bright tur-

quoise Knoll love-

seat and several Lu-

cie pieces to choose from, it's

the most impossible to

keep from blowing

your budget. But

according to Bal-

lon, his prices are

set so you don't

have to break the bank.

The Springer desk "retails for

\$1,500 at Gallery-

OB and the same desk at competing Manhattan dealers is \$7,000.

And there are a few tempting items for those of us who haven't scored a million-dollar DUMBO condo but still want to decorate like we've got that kind of cash.

"I like to also throw in pieces that are accessible to everyone," said Ballon.

GalleryOB (163 Plymouth St. at Jay Street in DUMBO) is open Tuesday through Friday, from noon to 7 pm, and weekends, from 11 am to 6 pm. For information, call (718) 222-1885 or visit www.galleryob.com.

— Julianne Bumun

The algo-rhythm

Kelly King might have the MTV-friendly look of your everyday pop tart, but she's got a voice that growls and purrs like an old school blues beller. We know she's got a soft spot for karaoke and wouldn't be surprised if these ladies were some of her favorites. Listening to "Live the Dream" reminded us of all three.



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Red White & Bubbly is pleased to announce the release of our very own wine—Brooklyn Wine Co.

Brooklyn Wine Co. was established by Red White & Bubbly to celebrate the spirit of Brooklyn through wine. We work closely with specially selected winemakers from around the world to create unique wines that we are happy to offer to our friends in Brooklyn.

As passionate Brooklynites, we desired a strong connection between our home and the wines we create. We relish the opportunity to use our labels as a way of highlighting Brooklyn's rich artistic and cultural heritage through local artistry that continues to advance the renaissance of our great borough.

We owe our inaugural series of wine labels to the foresight of the Brooklyn Bridge's architect and designer, John Roebling. Roebling was captivated by the skies that would preside over his landmark, understanding that his bridge would often become a silhouette against a backdrop of unimaginable colors. The Brooklyn Bridge, overlaid on various skylines captures the soul of our wines and pays tribute to Roebling and his vision.

On display at the shop are the original oil on canvas paintings by artist Ryan Seslow which were the inspiration for our inaugural series of labels.

Look for our newest collection of wines from The North Fork of Long Island coming soon.

Cheers,
Darrin Siegfried & Adam Goldstein
Co-Owners of Red White & Bubbly



Red White and Bubbly
211 5th Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11217
718-636-WINE
redwhiteandbubbly.com



9 DAYS...

Continued from page 2
bers of New York Historical Society. 1 p.m. Meet at main entrance of the Union Temple. 25th Street. (212) 439-1090.

PERFORMANCE
NUTCRACKER: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts presents "The Colonel Nutcracker." \$12.

WEDNESDAY
2 pm. Walt Whitman Theatre, Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Rd. (718) 951-4500.

DRAMA: Frasier Augustin and Makandal present "Night of the Fox." Playhouse on the Avenue. A Voudou Drama of Death and Rebirth. 8 p.m. South Oxford Street. (138) 554-0000.

953-6624. Free.

SING-ALONG: St. Luke Lutheran Church. "Messiah" community sing-in. 4 p.m. Reception follows. Rehearsal at 3 p.m. 5464 Fourth Ave. (718) 439-8978. Free.

CHORAL MUSIC: Brooklyn Philharmonic Chorus performs "Messiah" and "Requiem." 8 p.m. 506 Seth Street. (718) 783-3644.

CANDLELIGHT CONCERT: Les St. Chorale performs "A Christmas Mass." 8 p.m. St. Ignatius Xavier Church, Sacred Christmas mass in English. Free and open to the public. 12 p.m. 730 Sixth Avenue and Carroll Street. (212) 661-1200.

LECTURE SERIES: Congregation B'nai Avraham hosts a series of lectures on the Kabbalah and the 22 Letters of the Hebrew Alphabet. "Rabbi Rachel" will speak. 7 p.m. 117 Remsen St. (718)

596-4840, ext. 18. Free.

OTHER

PET ADOPTION: City Universe, 1000 Avenue of the Americas. 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Regina Fauci Youth Center, 1258 65th St. (718) 432-1362.

WINTER WALK: Brooklyn Museum hosts a art-making workshop inspired by its exhibition "The Art of Childhood: Children and seniors, free for members and kids 12 and under." 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 200 Eastern Pkwy. (718) 538-5000.

LIBRARY

Brooklyn Central branch presents Katie Roiphe in a talk about the memoir "The Last Days of Katherine Mansfield and other women writers." 7 p.m. Congregation B'nai Avraham, 1258 65th St. (718) 230-2100. Free.

SALE: Annual craft fair at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. See Sat., Dec. 8.

MON, DEC 10

Seventh night of Hanukkah

MINORAH LIGHTING: Brooklyn's official menorah, 5 p.m. Corner of Montague and Court Streets. See Sat., Dec. 8.

MINORAH LIGHTING: Candlelighting at Congregation B'nai Elohim. 8 p.m. See Sat., Dec. 8.

MINORAH LIGHTING: Congregation B'nai Elohim, corner of Carroll Street and Remsen Street. 8 p.m. (718) 768-3814. Free.

MINORAH LIGHTING: Grand Army Plaza. Live music, hot latkes and gifts for kids will be available. 6 p.m. (718) 965-2000. Free.

MINORAH LIGHTING: Candles are lit in the steps of Congregation B'nai Elohim, corner of Carroll Street and Remsen Street. 8 p.m. (718) 768-3814. Free.

MINORAH LIGHTING: Congregation B'nai Elohim, 1258 65th St. (718) 230-2100. Free.

MON, DEC 10

Sleight of hand: Here, Santa grets two young girls at Triangle Park in Bay Ridge. Old

Saint Nick will be making stops throughout Brooklyn this year, including a visit to Regis Hall in Bay Ridge on Dec. 11.

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Sleight of hand: Here, Santa grets two young girls at Triangle Park in Bay Ridge. Old

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What the 'Huck'?

Until now, late night food and drink on the Lower East Side have meant beer and a slice of pizza. However, with the opening of Huckleberry Bar on Grand Avenue at Lorimer Street, all of that has changed.

The cozy, modern space is owned by Owen and Matt, helmed by Stephanie Schneider and Andy Boggs, two neighborhood residents and long-time fine-dining experts. Schneider and Boggs met while working at Blue Smoke. Danni Meyer's "New York" barbecue joint, but have decided to put their talents to use a little closer to home.

"Both of us have lived here for awhile and felt the neighborhood was missing something," Schneider told GO Brooklyn.

"It's growing rapidly, but the businesses around here are taking over the process with the restaurants, but they close at 11 or midnight, so then where do you go? We want to extend that experience."

And what an experience it is. Alongside a sturdy wine list and plenty of beer, the menu offers a variety of fancy, seasonal cocktails — hot buttered rum made with house-infused vanilla and allspice rum for \$8 — and high-end sandwiches like the white-tablecloth-extravagant, cheese-filled aged (though mostly now), which even we would stop for by Johnson's tasty treats, like the prosciutto with aged gouda and apple butter sandwich, which goes for a

reasonable \$8.

"It's growing rapidly, but the businesses around here are taking over the process with the restaurants, but they close at 11 or midnight, so then where do you go? We want to extend that experience."

"A far as hospitality, we gleamed a lot from Blue Smoke," Schneider said. "You take care of each other, your guests and your community.... Hospitality has to be in your nature, you can't teach people that."

Huckleberry Bar (388 Grand St. at Lorimer Street in Williamsburg) is open daily from 4 pm to 4 am. For information, call (718) 218-8555 or visit www.huckleberrybar.com

— Sarah McCormick

BROOKLYN Nightlife

Compiled by Chiara V. Cowan

BAY RIDGE

The Salty Dog

7507 Bay Rd., at 76th Street in Bay Ridge, (718) 238-9260.

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Wednesday: Karaoke, Night, 9 pm, FREE.

The Wicked Monk

8411 60th St., at 8th Street in Bay Ridge, (718) 921-0667.

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Older the better

Three Italian bistros claim boro seniority

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The death in October of Nick Monte, a former owner of Monte's Venetian Room, stirred up a debate that has never been publicly resolved: what is the borough's oldest Italian restaurant?

At the top of the list are the claim:

In the red corner, weighing in at 101 years is Monte's, a Carroll Street eatery that recently got a facelift with a caption that reads "The Oldest Italian Restaurant" (and whose cheesecake is said to be better than you know whose).

In the green corner, is Ferdinando's.

According to U.S. Patent and Trademark



From top, Monte's, Ferdinando's and Monte's all claim to be Brooklyn's oldest Italian restaurant.

goods come," said Francesco Buffa, the current owner of Ferdinando's, who prefers recognition for his squid-ink pasta and the excellent panisse sandwich.

So if Monte's is at a standstill bragging rights, it may have naming rights.

Both Monte's and Ferdinando's operated under different names at various times.

Ferdinando's, for instance, was "Paul's Focacceria."

City and state records are no help.

The City Department of Buildings does not have certificates of occupancy for Ferdinando's or Monte's. (It did have a CO for "Paul's" for Ferdinando's.)

The state Department of Taxation is no better.

Even if it could find records from the early 1900s, it wouldn't be able to reveal their names or prove their ages.

The most definitive piece of information came from Anthony Bamonte, who says he has the original deed to the Withers Street building from 1900 (see photo).

Still Monte's doesn't concede an inch, because the name is not necessarily meant that the building cited in the deed actually housed a restaurant.

And the April 7, 1900 edition of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle reported that Paul's Focacceria, said to recently have opened on Withers, would become the Liberty Hall, the restaurant's original name.

"In our heart, we know we are older. Other people can say what they want," said Tom Monte, the Venetian Room's owner.

Monte's would remind Bamonte of conversations he used to have with Nick Monte about the sign.

"If that's what you say, no hard feelings," said Anthony Bamonte, about the sign at the Venetian Room. "It's what you produce that counts."

Oldies but goodies

At least three venerable Brooklyn eateries claim to be the oldest Italian restaurant in the borough. But how do they stack up? See our handy guide.

RESTAURANT	BAMONTE'S	MONTE'S VENETIAN ROOM	FERDINANDO'S FOCACCERIA
Address	32 Withers St., at Union Avenue	451 Carroll St., between Nevins Street and Third Avenue	151 Union St., between Hicks and Columbia streets
Neighborhood	Williamsburg	Gowanus	Carroll Gardens
Year opened	1900 — and Anthony Bamonte, the owner, has the deed to prove it.	1906	1904
Still in the family?	Yes. Anthony's grandparents opened it.	Sort of. Tony Monte took over the restaurant from his grandfather Angelo Monte and his four brothers, in 1994. Their father was the original owner.	Ferdinando Scaramitato bought it in 1960 from his boss Paul Bensante (when it was called Paul's Focacceria).
Changes over time	Gone are the catering hall, the bocce courts, and two earlier names. The restaurant opened as the Liberty Hall and, in the 1940s, it was the Withers Bar and Grill.	Just the staff's dress code, which "went from vest and tie to golf shirts."	Started as a lunch place catering to dockworkers. Now there are later hours and a full Sicilian menu.
Italian origins	Salerno, near Naples	Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi, near Naples	Palermo, Sicily
House specialties	Mussels marinara, linguini with crab sauce	Italian cheesecake and giambotta (a peasant dish of chicken, sausage, potatoes and peppers)	Panisse sandwich (deep-fried round bread patty topped with fresh ricotta), and pasta con sardine (spaghetti with sardines, fennel and pine nuts).
Famous moments	The restaurant was twice filmed in — what else? — "The Sopranos," as well as "Kojak." And "Joe DiMaggio would fly into New York and his first stop was Bamonte's," said Lisa Bamonte.	"Sammy Davis Jr. walked in with 39 people from the Copacabana and they put on a show," with the three-piece house band. "He sang, he danced, he drank and tipped everyone who went by."	Martin Scorsese filmed parts of "The Departed" here.

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Santa on Atlantic

Santa and 1-year-old Victoria Fisher from Boerum Hill enjoy the lighting of the Atlantic Avenue tree at the Belarusian Church at Bond Street, sponsored by the Atlantic Avenue Local Development Corporation and Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association.

BIAS CLAIM...

Continued from page 1

Atkins did not return an e-mail seeking an additional comment. A spokesperson for the borough President's office said Atkins would not be available to comment.

The suit is seeking unspecified damages, including lost wages, lost retirement income, compensation for pain and suffering and punitive damages against Markowitz and his office for multiple violations of the city's anti-discrimination laws.

Weiss, who once worked for Markowitz's predecessor, Howard Golden, joined Markowitz's team as a speechwriter in July 2003. But soon after the borough president announced a round of "seniority-based staff layoffs" and, since she was a recent hire, she opted to leave.

But while Weiss was working at another public relations job, Markowitz courted her to return, promising a promotion to communications director, court papers say.

Weiss took that job in late 2004 — but was immediately "subjected to unlawful treatment" by Atkins that was based, she said, on her gender.

Some of the charges in Weiss's suit read like the overblown grievances of a disgruntled employee: Atkins, Atkins' boss,

"infidely insisted on micromanaging" and "had her compelled to supervise her every move," and added that Atkins lavished praise on male employees, yet never on her.

But the legal papers make a much more serious claim that Weiss' termination was "unlawfully dismissed for political purposes during a year [2005] when the borough president was running for re-election." She said that Atkins told her in January 2006 that she was asked to resign because the office needed someone "who castest the political waters."

Within days of her departure after she left the borough president's office, another employee told her union shop steward that she "was being subjected to a hostile work environment due to inappropriate sexual activity taking place in the executive office among Atkins and her."

The court papers do not explain the activity, and Weiss's lawyer, Jack Tuckner, refused to elaborate, saying the allegation occurred after Weiss had left the office.

It was not clear from the documents about Weiss's allegation to the should political work for Markowitz during his re-election year. Tuckner said the work included preparing the Beep for debates and reviewing campaign literature. He called it "a fairly significant distraction" from her official duties.

If true, it would be another example of Markowitz, who is again still courting a run for mayor. Using city workers for campaign purposes is illegal, though Tuckner was quick to say that the "alleged misuse of public employees" and the "allusion to sexual going ons" is not part of this case.

"It's clear it shows how this office conducts itself on ethical and human rights issues."

Weiss declined to discuss her case, but issued a statement saying, "My career and my self-confidence have been hugely damaged by the discriminatory and disparaging treatment I endured at Brooklyn Borough Hall. I cannot let that stand."

YOUTUBE...

Continued from page 1

many years. Illegals have no rights, they should be deported.

"Lasciateci questione that I did because I was annoyed by reports about illegals in Bed-Stuy and Bath Beach cat-calling women and running in public. They talk in pockets of areas, ruin the neighborhood and lower the quality of life."

Nardi's question has generated controversy all over the country — but mostly in the form of people e-mailing him to call him a bigot.

"You can't ignore the issue at all," he says, adding that the anonymous poster, adding that Nardi is "a divisive nationalist that needs to keep his mouth shut and keep his hateful comments to himself."

But Ernie Nardi doesn't mind (if he did, he wouldn't be Ernie Nardi). "I put Dyker Heights on the national radar and I'm glad my message is out," he said.

Part of his message, by the way, is that he favors legal immigration

— for anyone who has "a desire to assimilate" when he or she gets here.

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HOME IMPROVEMENT

CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

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The Brooklyn Paper **HOME IMPROVEMENT**

A collage of various local business advertisements for home improvement, construction, and services in Brooklyn, NY. The ads are arranged in a grid-like layout and include: 1. **Appliance Repair**: Expert Repairs, All Makes and Models, Refrigerators, Air Conditioners, Washers & Dryers, Stoves & Ovens. Call Benson (646) 246-2440. 2. **ADS WORK!**: Place your classified advertisement today and watch your business grow. Call (718) 834-9350. 3. **The Brooklyn Paper**: Contractors. 4. **FACE LIFT CONTRACTING**: Restorations & Remodeling, Exterior & Interior, Over 20 Years Experience, Stripping & Refinishing, Finished Basements, Room Additions, Kitchens & Bathrooms, Tile - Marble - Granite - Ceramic Tile - Painting, Plastering - Roofing - Siding - Plumbing & Electric, Ceilings & Floors - Lots - Apartments - Brownstones Residential - Commercial, Rubbish Removal, Design & Consulting, Exclusive 10 Year Warranty, Local, Reliable, 100% Satisfaction Guaranteed. First Time Home Buyer Discount & Concessions. To Help You On Your Way, All Types of Repair Expertly Done. Ask for George: 1-847-722-6540. Senior Citizen Discount. Licensed & Insured. 5. **AVANTI HOME IMPROVEMENT INC**: INTERIOR ROOFING SPECIALIST. Jobs are Owner Supervised. We have been doing a great job for over ten years. Insured & Bonded. Lic# 1157104. 6. **Cee Dee PROFESSIONAL CONTRACTORS**: FLOOR SANDING ALSO AVAILABLE. Broken or Missing Balusters/Splines, Weak or Broken Steps (Treads, Stringers or Risers). Call: 718-893-4006. 7. **Contractors**: STONEHENGE CONSTRUCTION GROUP. Kitchens - Bathrooms - Tiling - Painting - Plastering - Sheetrock - Electrical - Basements - Wood Flooring - Closets - Replacement Windows. 30 YRS IN THE BUSINESS. 917-974-3625. LIC# 1200619 - INSURED. 8. **KNOCKOUT RENOVATION**: DESIGN - PRODUCTS - REMODELING. Residential Remodeling, Specialty Work, Complete Home Interior and kitchen remodeling. License # 1207599. 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(718) 592-2379. martin@mdparchitects.com. 12. **Asbestos**: LEINSTER CONTRACTING. The Complete Environmental Company Asbestos & Lead Abatement Thermal System Installation Spray on Fireproofing. Contact Liam Hogan (718) 651-9100. Lic# 405-40600. 13. **Bath Tile & Kitchen**: John Costelloe Plumbing and Tile Work. Toilets, Sinks and shower heads replaced. Specializing in Kitchen Remodels. Free Estimates • Reasonable Rates. John Costelloe (718) 768-7610. 14. **Carpentry**: CRAFTY PLUS. Closets - Kitchens - Sheet Rock Walls - Taping to Finish - Paint - Hardwood Floors - Custom Units - Window Installation & Tile Work. Dependable with references Kevin (718) 331-9251. 15. **Carpentry Plus**: Closets - Kitchens - Sheet Rock Walls - Taping to Finish - Paint - Hardwood Floors - Custom Units - Window Installation & Tile Work. Dependable with references Kevin (718) 331-9251. 16. **Carpentry**: VASILIOS GIOUOSOS WOODWORKING. Hi Tech Kitchens - Bookcases - Refector Boxes - Furniture. Call Bill 718-522-0338. 68 Jay Street, Brooklyn 11201. Monday - Friday. 17. **Chimney**: 1ST CHOICE HOME SOLUTIONS INC. Heating Fireplace Cleaning & Repairs Boiler Cleaning & Installation Gas & Oil Furnace Cleaning. Fireplace Accessories 718-762-9200. 18. **Chimney**: CHIMNEY. 19. **Cleaning Services**: RICHARDS CLEANING SERVICE. Residential & Office Cleaning. First 3 hrs. only \$40. 718-265-2804. marirc6@aol.com. 20. **Cleaning Services**: MURPHY & MAIDS. EST. 1960. Residential Cleaning. Specializing in: All Phases of Domestic Service. Residential Cleaning and Gift Certificates Available. 718-279-3334. 21. **Cleaning Services**: SUNSHINE CLEANING SERVICE. Commercial & Residential. Free Estimates 917-408-2621. 347-645-4049. info@sunshinecleaningservice@yahoo.com. 22. **DEMOLITION & EXCAVATION**: ENLIGHTENED CLEANING SERVICE, INC. Complete Cleaning Services, Residential & Commercial Office - Residential - General. Let us maintain your hallways! 718-573-4165. 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CHRISTOPHER JOHN Electrical Inc. 718-789-9898 www.ChristopherJohn.com. 33. **Contractors**: CHIMNEY. 34. **Contractors**: DECKS. 35. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 36. **Contractors**: DECKS. 37. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 38. **Contractors**: DECKS. 39. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 40. **Contractors**: DECKS. 41. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 42. **Contractors**: DECKS. 43. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 44. **Contractors**: DECKS. 45. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 46. **Contractors**: DECKS. 47. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 48. **Contractors**: DECKS. 49. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 50. **Contractors**: DECKS. 51. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 52. **Contractors**: DECKS. 53. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 54. **Contractors**: DECKS. 55. **Contractors**: EXPRESS HARDWOOD FLOORING. 56. **Contractors**: DECKS. 57. **Contractors**: EXPRESS 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